



Prince George's County
Public Schools

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News Release: Ready to Reconnect — Students Return to Classrooms for 2021-22 School Year

September 8, 2021

For Immediate Release

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UPPER MARLBORO, Md. — Today, Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) will begin the 2021-22 school year with most students returning to classrooms after two years of virtual and hybrid learning.

Chief Executive Officer Dr. Monica Goldson will start the day at Deerfield Run Elementary in Laurel to welcome learners back to school. Afterwards, Dr. Goldson will be joined by State Superintendent of Schools Mohammed Choudhury and Lt. Gov. Boyd Rutherford for a visit to Port Towns Elementary in Bladensburg.

The school visits will be followed by lunch at DuVal High School in Lanham with Prince George's County Teacher of the Year Adrin Leak and school staff. Prince George's County Board of Education and State Board of Education members will join Dr. Goldson at various sites.

"We are ready for our students to reconnect with hands-on learning, caring educators, classmates, sports and extracurricular activities," said Dr. Goldson. "Nothing replaces the dynamic between a student, educator and their classmates. We are looking forward to a successful year, from the first day of school to the last."

To support safe learning and work environments, PGCPS has implemented universal mask-wearing in all schools and offices, COVID-19 vaccination and testing policies, and strict cleaning and sanitizing protocols. All employees are required to either show proof of COVID vaccination or undergo weekly testing. PGCPS is working in collaboration with the Maryland State Department Health and Safeway to hold vaccine clinics at middle schools later this month.

Although the majority of the school system's 132,000 students will return to in-person learning, five days a week, PGCPS is serving some students virtually. An innovative Online Campus is launching this fall as a new specialty program designed for seventh through 12th graders who thrived in the virtual learning environment. In addition, more than 12,000 kindergarten through sixth grade students are enrolled in a temporary virtual option; the program will end when the COVID-19 vaccine is available for children under age 12.

Back to School Highlights:

New Principals

Nineteen schools are welcoming new principals: Academy of Health Sciences at Prince George's Community College, Croom and Fairmont Heights high schools, International High School at Langley Park, Andrew Jackson and Green Valley academies, CMIT South, three middle schools, eight elementary schools and Frances Fuchs Early Childhood Center.

Historic New School Construction

With nine schools under construction, including six using a first-of-its-kind alternative financing model, this year marks a notable shift toward 21st century, modern learning environments. Replacement buildings for Cherokee Lane Elementary and William Wirt Middle School are also being built along with a new Glenridge area middle school.

School Bus Upgrades

More than 1,200 school buses have new technology to improve driver efficiency and student safety on and off of school buses. New stop-arm cameras will capture video of motorists who violate school bus traffic laws resulting in citation. GPS-enabled tablets will help to provide accurate, real-time data. A new mobile app will help parents monitor bus location and schedules.

Strategic Plan

The school system will introduce its 2021-2026 strategic plan, a roadmap anchored in equity, to guide decisions, priorities, resources and work towards transformation over the next five years. The outcome goals include: educational excellence, excellence in equity, workforce and operational excellence, and increased mental health and wellness for students and employees.

School Boundary Initiative

PGCPS will enter the second phase of its Comprehensive School Boundary Initiative, which seeks to address growth and balance school enrollment across the county. The first phase of community engagement resulted in three draft boundary scenarios. Community engagement will continue this school year.

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